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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9667  
INFO RUEHXS/ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS PRIORITY  
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY 2258  
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING PRIORITY 7904  
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL PRIORITY 6126  
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA PRIORITY 0330  
RUEHCHI/AMCONSUL CHIANG MAI PRIORITY 7534  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
RHHMUNA/CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI PRIORITY  
RUEKDIA/DIA WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
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Monday, 25 January 2010, 07:59

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 03 BANGKOK 000192

SIPDIS

STATE FOR EAP/MLS, NSC FOR WALTON

EO 12958 DECL: 01/25/2030

TAGS PREL, PGOV, TH

SUBJECT: THAILAND: AMBASSADOR ENGAGES PRIVY COUNCIL CHAIR

PREM, OTHER "ESTABLISHMENT" FIGURES ON YEAR AHEAD

REF: BANGKOK 184 (SEH DAENG)

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Classified By: Ambassador Eric G. John, reason 1.4 (b,d)

11. (S) Summary: Ambassador paid a series of New Year's-related calls on influential Thai figures, including Privy Council Chair GEN Prem, Priv  
12. (S) Comment: On the two most difficult and sensitive issues of the day in Thailand -- Thaksin and the monarchy -- the Thai elite appear as  
Mixed Views on Abhisit's performance

13. (C) Privy Councilor Chair GEN Prem shared his assessments of PM Abhisit, the Crown Prince's relationship with Thaksin, and difficulties de  
14. (C) Fellow Privy Councilor ACM Siddhi, hosting Ambassador at his home January 11, was more critical of Abhisit than Prem. Siddhi said that  
Political Year Ahead

15. (C) While GEN Prem expressed moderate concern about the potential for violence and political discord in early 2010, he felt the situation w  
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excessive disruptions of government functions and daily lives of citizens; Ambassador explained the U.S. system of permits for protests which a

16. (C) ACM Siddhi expressed more concerns than Prem about the security situation in 2010, suggesting that Army Commander Anupong's inability t  
Royal Family: King, Crown Prince, Entourages

17. (S) Regarding King Bhumibol's health, Prem indicated that the King was exercising 30 minutes a day on a stationary bicycle at Siriraj Hospi  
18. (S) Prem acknowledged Crown Prince Vajiralongkorn probably maintained some sort of relationship with fugitive former PM Thaksin, "seeing hi

19. (S) ACM Siddhi, in a similar vein, noted that the Crown Prince frequently slipped away from Thailand, and that information about his air hc

110. (S) Ambassador mentioned to Siddhi the Crown Prince's more engaging approach in the early December King's Birthday reception with Ambassac

111. (S) Ambassador similarly raised the Crown Prince's more confident demeanor with former PM Anand in late December, seeking Anand's assessme  
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similar to Siddhi's, but more detailed and blunt. Anand said that he had always believed that the Crown Prince would succeed his father, accord

112. (S) ACM Siddhi expressed his personal concern about the declining image of the royal family in Thailand, noting that something as simple a

Thaksin and Hun Sen

113. (C) Thaksin clearly remained on the mind of all three "establishment" figures. Former PM Anand asserted that the King's health and mood re

114. (C) ACM Siddhi said that PM Abhisit had called him on his 90th birthday recently and had indicated that now that Thailand was no longer a

115. (C) ACM Siddhi attacked Thaksin as trying to use money, red-shirt protests, and Hun Sen to "destroy our country," but he predicted Thaksir